



San Diego City Attorney **MICHAEL J. AGUIRRE**

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 12, 2006

Contact: Maria Velasquez, Communications Director (619) 235-5725 (pager & voicemail) mvelasquez@saniego.gov

POPULAR NIGHT CLUBS PLEAD NO CONTEST TO CHARGES OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY OVERCROWDING

San Diego, CA: Hennessey's Tavern in Pacific Beach and The Ould Sod Irish Pub in Normal Heights pled no contest today to misdemeanor violations for overcrowding and exceeding occupancy beyond the California Fire Code Section limits during this year's March 17, St. Patrick's Day celebrations. At Hennessey's the posted occupancy was 188 persons but the club occupancy swelled to 512 persons. At the Ould Sod Irish Pub, the posted occupancy was 99 persons but the club allowed 175 persons inside.

"In recent times, there have been tragic situations in over-crowded night clubs that have resulted in injuries and even death," said City Attorney Michael Aguirre. "We will not allow that to happen in San Diego by aggressively pursuing these types of fire code violations."

The cases were prosecuted by the City Attorney's Code Enforcement Unit in the Criminal Division as a result of a joint St. Patrick's Day investigation by the City's Fire-Rescue Department, San Diego Police Department, and the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

Each club will pay fines totaling \$1,720 and be subject to court probation for three years. As part of the plea bargain agreement, the clubs must now monitor their occupancy load to ensure that this doesn't happen again. Subsequent overcrowding violations could result in additional fines and possible closure of the establishments.

The City Attorney's Code Enforcement Unit was established in 1984 to address code violations and nuisance properties throughout San Diego. The Unit aggressively prosecutes cases referred from a variety of City Departments responsible for enforcing local and state codes.

###